(iv) Another group is on the south-west side of the lake, north of the Ngoni at Deduo and east of the Ngoni of Nchisu district.[1]

Although these are the main concentrations of Yao, smaller communities are scattered through most of the districts of south Nyasaland.

MAP SHOWING SOME IMPORTANT SITES CONCERNED WITH THE INSTALLATION

Distribution of Yao shown as a percentage of the population of each district
(1931 Census)

Over 50%:	South Nyasa	75%	10-20%:	Deduo	15%
	Upper Shire	60%		Zomba	8%
				Mlanje	6%
30-40%:	Blantyre	38%		Chiradzulu	5%
20-30%:	Chiradzulu	28%	1-5%:	Chikwawa	2%
	Zomba	28%		Ncheu	1.5%

History

Nothing is known of the history of the Yao before their settlement at Mponda's.[2] Their contact with the Arab traders from the east coast had probably continued for one years before the Europeans arrived.[3] When Lacerda wrote in 1798 the Yao were

[1] Cunningham, *Ibid*, p. 210.
[2] Sharpe, A. 1901, Stokes, 1910, & v. Warren, 1910.
[3] Livingstone in 1866 noted the strength of Arab influence.

1: Yao E-4 (no date) 1950 F77 Yao F77

even competing with the Arabs for the inland trade.[1] At some uncertain date there were two migratory movements away from the original home of the Yao. The first was a scattering from Hill Yao to surrounding hills, possibly due to internal dissension.[2] The next movement was caused by an attack of the Makua between 1830 and 1850.[3] One party moved northward, finally settling in Tanganyika, as has been mentioned. Four parties moved south into Nyasaland.

(a) *Achisi Yao*, who first moved from Mwembe to Mchisi hill, and then to Nyasaland, where they are represented by those under Kanali Native Authority.

(b) *Amasenga Yao*, who first moved to Limasinga hill, near the Lurwisi river, and then to the south-east of Lake Nyasa, where their descendants are now under Makanjira Native Authority.

(c) *Amangochi Yao*, first went to settle at Mangochi, near Fort Johnston. They were later driven out of Mangochi, by the last group, and scattered.

(d) *Amachinga Yao*, first went to the vicinity of Mandimba hill, near the source of the Lujenda river. They were ousted from this fertile valley by the attacks of the Lomwe, and came into Nyasaland in four parties.

One party of Machinga Yao under Nkora (now called Jalasi, or Jumbi) attacked the Yao at Mangochi, drove them south and themselves finally settled there. Another party under Nkumula came with Nkora as far as Mangochi, then turned off to Chisoti hill in the Fort Johnston area. A third group, under Makencia and Mtumanje, moved down to the Domasi valley via Isalo hill, where they were attacked by the fourth Machinga group, under Kawinga. The latter had also accompanied Nkora's party as far as Mangochi, then crossed the Shire river to the west; here they were attacked by the Mawiko Ngoni under Chidzunga and moved south-east to Chikala, which they occupied until defeated by the British. Liwanda, the brother of Kawinga, moved to the Shire river.

The Amangochi Yao, after they had been scattered by the Amachinga, settled some in the Chiromba part of Dedza district, some at Mount Zomba, some migrated to Ndirande hill near Blantyre, some to Soche hill, some to Chiradzulu, Ngabudi, Mulanje, and Nkulu hills. These Amangochi Yao constitute about half the Yao population in Nyasaland.[4]

The Yao invasion of Nyasaland was not an organized military expedition, like that of the Ngoni. The first immigrants came peacefully in small kinship groups. They took advantage of Nyanja factions to consolidate their position, until, by 1876, when the Church of Scotland Mission was established at Blantyre, the Yao were a ruling class dominating the earlier inhabitants.[5] At the same time they vigorously carried on their slaving activities. In 1893 Thompson noted that the fertile country of the watershed between the Ruo and the Shire rivers was uninhabited because of Yao raids.[6]

The Yao of Nyasaland suffered from Ngoni raids, but were never subject to them. Several tributes have been paid to their military qualities,[7] and indeed it took five years from 1891, when the Protectorate was declared, before the Yao were subdued and the slave trade, to which they had been principal parties with the Arabs, sup-

[1] Rowley, 1869, p. 27. [2] Abdallah, 1919.
[3] Abdallah, 1919, p. 7; Murray, 1930.
[4] Historical notes in unpublished administrative papers.
[5] Sir Harry Johnston, 1897, pp. 348 and 369. [6] Thompson, 1895, p. 60.
[7] Rowley, 1869, p. 27, and Ringrose, 1909.

passed. Two contingents of Sikla were sent unsuccessfully to take Kawinga's fortress in Chikala in 1894; Makanjira was defeated in 1894, Kawinga, Jalasi, Matipwiri, and Tambala in 1898.[1] They were later allowed to return, but they were not recognized as chiefs by the Administration.

The end of tribal wars and of slave raids made large defensive settlements unnecessary, and the peace saw the splitting up of communities, which rendered the task of the Administration more difficult. The abolition of domestic slavery, by reducing the power of headmen, further contributed to the tendency to live in small scattered settlements. In 1902 the Nyasaland District Administration Ordinance was passed with the object of concentrating the villages into larger communities.

The first movement of Tew from Portuguese East Africa to Mwasi took place about the end of the 1830's. According to one account they were originally expelled from the territory between Marako's and Utungo by the Mandwe Ngoni.[2] Then the Mdewa attacked them, breaking up the tribe still more, so that they migrated north to Mwasi, the south-west of the Mdewando plateau, and the banks of the lower Ruvuma. At Mwasi they were again attacked by Ngoni, but defeated them, and then retired to the Mdewando plateau, where they were again attacked by Ngoni. There is a tradition that at some time after 1850 the region was toured by an emissary of the Sultan of Zanzibar, 'Bakisi', who gave the whole country to Matola, a Tew chief, to rule from Nivendo. In the area between Mwasi and the Ruvuma river the Tew are in a majority and politically supreme over their neighbours the Mdewando, Mdewa, Ngindo, Matambwe, and Ndendo.[3] At Mtua, on the Mdewando plateau, there is a settlement of Tew who were rescued from the Ngoni on the east shore of Lake Nyasa by Captain Engelhardt, and transferred there. These in outward appearance could hardly be distinguished from the Swahili of the coast.[4]

Distribution

The Tew population of Nyasaland has increased steadily but its relation to the total population has not increased:

1911		1931		1945	
Tew population	Percentage of total population	Tew population	Percentage of total population	Tew population	Percentage of total population
18,483	0.5	24,613	0.5	28,177	0.5

Even in the predominantly Tew areas the population is not homogeneous, either ethnically or linguistically. In the three areas in which there are a large number of Tew (Kawinga and Liwonde of Zomba district and Nyambi of Fort Johnston), they represent roughly 48·6, 73, and 73 per cent. of the total population, the next most important section being Ngoni (Lomwe) immigrants from Portuguese East Africa.[5] Some Ngoni still themselves Tew when questioned.

The density in these areas is respectively 63·3, 32, and 32 per square mile.[6] This

[1] Cunningham, *Shiré*, p. 200; Monteiro, 1, 1904, pp. 86, 100-1, 130-1; Johnson, *Africa*, p. 200.
[2] Livingstone, *Africa*, p. 32. [3] Weule, 1909, pp. 108-48.
[4] *Shiré*, p. 48. [5] Mitchell and Greene, 1936, 1951, and 1952.
[6] 1945 Census.

1: Tew E-4 [no date] 1950 377 Yao 377

appointed also in the question by the marriage services. The couple are exhorted to 585
refer disputes to the services, and to consult the diviner in case of sickness.[1] After the
six these two services have special responsibilities towards the couple; grievances
are referred to them, and they must be present when adultery cases are heard in
court. If the marriage witness ceremony has not been performed, the relationship is
not regarded as legal and no adultery compensation can be claimed by the husband.

Divorce used to be a private affair, which was merely signalized by one party giving 586
to the other an arrow as a token of separation.[2] Nowadays all divorce cases go to court.
The woman is usually asked to choose between her husband and the adulterer, and
the compensation paid to the former, if she decides to leave him, is higher—amount-
ing to about ten. A man can be sent away from the village by his wife's kin, but if he
has given no grounds for divorce he can claim compensation and will also take back [579]
any gifts made to his wife. A few small gifts to his mother-in-law are not reclaimed.
Divorces are easily obtained and frequent. Grounds for the divorce of a man may
include failure to pay his tax, one of the specific duties of the husband.

The custom of making a marriage payment is recorded by Johnson[3] (on the east 583
coast of Lake Nyasa) as a relatively new adoption. When given it is divided between 177
the bride's father, mother, and mother's brother and brother.[4]

Slavery

Domestic slavery was an important institution in the Yao social system. Slaves were 567
obtained by capture, purchase, or in compensation for injury.[5] A man would pay a
debt by giving slaves (wives or members of his matrilineal kin group) to his creditor.[6]
A man might voluntarily enslave himself to a rich having charge of many women, as
a means of obtaining a wife.[7] The children of a free man and a slave woman were not
emancipated, as their father could not take them from the village of their mother's
master, who had the right to sell them.[8] Slaves took part in the ordinary life of the
village; women slaves ranked as junior wives of their masters and shared the usual
work of women. Men might be supplied with guns for hunting or might accompany
their masters to war, trade for them, spin, weave, sew, make baskets.[9] The institution [569]
of domestic slavery was an expression of a dominant motif in Yao culture—the associa-
tion of status with a large number of dependents. Its abolition by the British was in
itself a major blow to the prestige and authority of the chiefs.

Information about the social organization of the Yao in Portuguese East Africa is 184
scanty, but it is in agreement with what is known of the Nyasaland Yao. Hetzel, who 602,
knew the Yao in Lindi district, Tanganyika Territory, confirms the correctness of
Stannus's account of the South Nyasa Yao.

The Yao came into Nyasaland in small parties of kinsmen. Their experience and 175
their superior weapons were enabled them to dominate the Nyanja among whom they
settled, and today they dominate the population of the Southern Province. They are [581]
organized into loose groups of villages, under petty, independent chiefs. They were [583]

[1] Stannus, A. views, A. war; Hynde, chief; Johnson, J. views, pp. 89-91; Macdonald, chief, vol. i,
Women, work, pp. 109-10.
[2] views, pp. 91-2.
[3] Stannus, A. views, A. chief.
[4] Stannus, A. views, A. chief.
[5] Women, work, pp. 108-9; Stannus, A. views, A. war.
[6] Hynde, views, p. 100 (not a reliable source).
[7] Macdonald, chief, vol. i, pp. 108-9.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Women, work, p. 109.

1: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FT? Tso FT?

never to have had any large-scale central political organization, and their history is full of occasions when one group of Tso has attacked another. Even within his own area the authority of the chief was not, apparently, sufficiently strong to prevent one village headman from raiding his neighbours; the chief maintained no standing army.[1] The chief held certain rights and privileges. He was entitled to the ground tusk of any elephant found in his territory (the finder was rewarded after it had been sold, with a cloth); he received tribute in food,[2] with which he entertained visitors. He took a share of the spoils of war and was also entitled to annual labour service and to a gift when he made a new burial place. Apart from his military and judicial responsibilities, he had authority to settle when and where initiation ceremonies should be held.[3] The right to hold these ceremonies was sought after by the village headmen as a mark of [illegible]. The chiefs or headmen of certain families had the right to wear a white cloth round their turbans as insignia of rank.[4]

In addition the chief had a certain ritual status. He was thought to incur mystical danger by contact with death, and so was not allowed to attend a funeral nor to eat a chicken brought by a messenger announcing a death, nor to accompany his military expeditions. He was supposed to have great power through special medicines. He had to make offerings to the ancestors, especially in affairs concerning the whole people, such as drought or epidemic. He was expected to give a burial cloth at the death of an important man. At his death a period of social disorganization was recognized, members of his village were allowed to pillage and rape, until he was buried.

Succession to the chiefly office was matrilineal. The chief's position was based partly on his status as the senior male of his own matrilineal kin group, partly on his wealth. His command over slaves, guns, and canoes to the coast was greater than that of others, and from these his military strength was derived, for a chief was powerless without his following of dependants. The chief of the area was also headman of his own village. In fact, the position and duties of a village headman (except that he could not exact tribute)[5] reproduced in small scale those of the chief. The headmen also were in mystical danger through contact with death and were the channel through which the ancestors were approached in affairs concerning the village. They, too, built up their prestige and wealth by slaving activities. They seem to have been largely independent of the chief, carrying on slave raids of their own, and if they could gain a sufficient following, they might break away from the chief, and set up their own chiefdoms.[6]

The chief ruled through a hierarchy of headmen. His councillors were superior headmen, placed over a number of village headmen. Commoners could approach the chief only through the councillor in whose area their village belonged. The councillor's special duties were to report daily to the chief on the affairs of his district, to advise, and to arbitrate in the chief's own domestic affairs, e.g. in conflicts between the chief and his brothers and nephews. The councillors were not necessarily relatives of the chief,[7] but were chosen on account of their general status in the community, and their

[1] Elmslie, s. chps. p. 109, says of the Tso in the Hora highlands: 'Every week one was sure might be set down as a chief . . . petty quarrels of petty chiefs were abundant . . .' See Macdonald, chiefs, vol. i, pp. 189 and 190. [2] Shannon, s. 1910, says that only here was meat so taxed.
[3] Ibid., p. 279. [4] Ibid., supra, p. 300.
[5] Macdonald, chiefs, vol. i, p. 16; Warren, 1908, p. 280. [6] Macdonald, chiefs, vol. i, p. 199.
[7] Ibid., pp. 32 and 138. [7] Ibid., p. 138.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE MODERN SITUATION

Before the White came

FIG To understand the Yao we must start with the Arab colonization of the east coast of Africa. We know that the Arabs had colonized it as early as A.D. 700. They were a mercantile people, and their trading was so well advanced that by the end of the twelfth century they had founded Kilwa, due east of the north end of Lake Nyasa, as an emporium.[1] When Vasco da Gama sailed up the east coast in 1498, he found that the Arabs had well-established ports all along the coast. The Portuguese and the Arabs became rivals for the trade of the African interior, and this rivalry was to continue for many centuries. In 1698 the Imam of Oman drove the Portuguese out as far south as Cape Delgado, and the Arabs had sole control of the east coast[2] up to that point.

The Yao say that their traditional home is between the Lujende and Rovuma Rivers, east of Lake Nyasa. There can be no doubt, therefore, that Arab trading expeditions passed through the Yao territory, especially since the Rovuma Valley is the most convenient route into Central Africa from Kilwa. We can be fairly certain that Yao contact with the Arabs began at least 200 years before the Europeans came.

Although it is fairly certain that the Jesuits from the Zambezi had explored the Shire Valley and the Lake regions, they left no easily available records of the inhabitants of these areas.[3] One of the earliest references to the Yao is recorded by Dr. Francisco Jose de Lacerda in a letter dated March 22nd, 1798, addressed to the Minister of State of Portugal. In it he explains his pro-

[1] Hichens, W., "Islam in Africa", in Ashworth, A. J., and London, H., *Islam Today* (London, 1951).

[2] Pim, A., *Economic History of Tropical Africa* (London, 1946), 19.

[3] Burton mentions in a footnote to Lacerda's *Journey to the Cazembe in 1798*, John Murray (London, 1873), 33, that a missionary Jesuit also known resided in this area from 1788 to 1792.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

pound visit to the Kasungu of Lunpula region, known then as the Wiru country. It is quite obvious that the Yao were serious competitors with the Portuguese for the land trade. Lacerda writes:

> The dry goods hitherto imported into this country [i.e. Wiru country], have been bought by the Mujao, indirectly or directly, from the Arabs of Zanzibar and its vicinity. Hence these people received all the ivory exported from the possessions of the Cazembe; whereas formerly it passed in great quantities through our port of Mozambique.[1]

It is reasonable to assume that because of their geographical position the Yao had conducted a considerable trade between the interior and the coast, mainly cloth and guns for slaves and ivory—the two were inseparable since the cheapest means of transporting ivory to the coast was by slaves. The Yao trade in slaves led to their major conflict with the British.

When Livingstone made his expedition up the Rovuma in 1866, he found abundant evidence of the influence of the Arabs. Speaking of the Yao chief Mataka, he says: "He gave me a square house to live in, and indeed most of the houses here are square, for the Arabs are imitated in everything."[2] Livingstone mentions in particular the trade in slaves that the Yao were conducting in Kilwa. He records that:

> The Waiyau generally are still the most active agents the slave-traders have. The caravan leaders from Kilwa arrive at a Waiyau village, show the goods they have brought, are treated liberally by the elders and told to wait and enjoy themselves, slaves enough to purchase all will be procured: then a foray is made against the Manganja who have few or no guns. The Waiyau who come against them are abundantly supplied with both by their coast guests. Several of the low coast Arabs, who differ in nothing from the Waiyau, usually accompany the foray, and do business on their own account.[3]

Even before Livingstone had made his expedition up the Rovuma Valley, there had been a large-scale movement in all directions of the Yao from their traditional home. The tradition is that the name Yao is taken from a hill, grass-covered but

[1] Burton, *Lacerda's Journey*.
[2] Waller, H., *The Last Journals of David Livingstone in Central Africa from 1865 until his Death*, John Murray (London, 1874), 13.
[3] Waller, *Last Journals*, 38.

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system, which is situated somewhere between Mwembe (in Portuguese East Africa) and the Lochilingo Range.[1]

It is convenient to divide the history of the Yao into two major episodes: firstly the movement from the Yao Hill to other hills, and secondly the movement into and within the Nyasaland Protectorate.

Episode I: The Scattering of the Tribe from the Yao Hill

The exact cause of the scattering of the tribe from their traditional home is not clear. Yohannah B. Abdallah suggests that it must have been some internal dissension.[2] Whatever the cause, the tribe broke up into a number of sections, each of which settled at yet another hill from which it took its name. Abdallah lists ten divisions[3] but we need consider only the four that penetrated into British Nyasaland.

These were:

1. The *Achisi Yao*, who settled at Michisi hill.
2. The *Amasenjere Yao*, who settled near the Lisenjere hill (near the Luwisi River in Portuguese East Africa).
3. The *Amangoche Yao*, who settled at Mount Mangoche near Fort Johnston, south of Lake Nyasa.
4. The *Amachinga Yao*, who settled near the Mandimba hill. They are called *Amachinga* because of the serrated edge of the range in which the Mandimba hill is situated. [*Lisinga*—a fence.]

Episode II: The Displacement of the Divisions from their Homes[4]

In time, each of the four sections mentioned found its way into Nyasaland. Briefly the details are:

1. The *Achisi Yao* are represented in Nyasaland by the people under Native Authority Kanduli in Fort Johnston district. The 1945 Census showed that there were 12,187 Yao under this chief, i.e. 4·3 per cent of the total Yao population of British Nyasaland. However, not all Yao under Kanduli are Achisi Yao, and there are no doubt Achisi Yao elsewhere in small numbers; but even

[1] Abdallah, *Chikala cha Wayao*, 7, edited and translated by Meredith Sanderson as *The History of the Yao*, Government Printer (Zomba, 1919).
[2] Abdallah, *Chikala*, 8. [3] Abdallah, *Chikala*, 9.
[4] For information on areas which I did not visit I have drawn heavily from the Administrative file "Historical Notes on Districts".

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if we estimate the total proportion as 5 per cent, it is still a small and relatively unimportant group.

2. The *Amasaninga Yao* are represented in British Nyasaland by the people under Native Authority Makanjira, and they are roughly 3 per cent of the total population of the Yao of the Territory. Makanjira himself is said to have been of Nyanja origin. He moved first to the Lisaninga Hills, where he acquired a mixed following of Amasaninga Yao and Nyanja; and then by conquest he moved on to the area round Fort Maguire, where he is now established. There are offshoots of the group in Dowa district across Lake Nyasa.

3. The *Amangoche Yao* are of much greater importance, and at present constitute about half of the Yao population of the Territory. During the early part of the nineteenth century, while this group was at Mangoche mountain, it was successfully attacked by the Amachinga Yao under Nkata and Kawinga, and scattered in all directions. Most of the people migrated southwards and settled in the Shire Highlands, where Mlumbe, Chikowi, Kapeni, Matipwiri and other representatives are found to-day.

4. The *Amachinga Yao*[1] were probably displaced from their traditional home, at Mpalimba on the Lujenda River in Portuguese East Africa, by attacks from the Lomwe inhabitants in the east. They say that wide-spread famines followed the war and forced most people to migrate. Present-day representatives of this group are Nkata, Jalasi, Mponda, Kalembo, Nsamala, Nyumbi, Kawinga, Liwonde, Malemia and Ntumanje in the Port Johnston and Zomba districts.

The Yao invasion into Nyasaland was not a military incursion of the Ngoni type. Definite evidence on the exact form of the invasion is not available, but informants maintain that many of the first immigrants came into the country peacefully and in family groups (*mbumba*). Often the immigrants found succour with Nyanja groups. Sometimes this hospitality was claimed because the Yao had the same clan names as the Nyanja. The Yao soon took the opportunity presented by internecine struggles among the Nyanja to consolidate their position in the country.

[1] For a more detailed history of this group, especially of the Malemia group, see Stannus, H. S. 'The Wayao of Nyasaland', *Harvard African Studies*, iii (1922), 233 ff.

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When Livingstone passed the Lake in 1866 he found Mponda living in approximately the same place as his successor does to-day, and he mentioned that Kawinga was living on the west of Lake Malombe.[1] He also mentioned that the Machinga dominated the whole of this area, showing that by this time there had been considerable movement into it. When the Church of Scotland Mission was established at Blantyre in 1876, Duff MacDonald recorded that the disposition of the chiefs was as follows: Mlumbe to the north-west of Zomba; Kapeni near Blantyre at Sochi; Mpama at Chiradzulu; Kawinga at Chikala; Malemia on the south-west side of Mount Zomba, and the Matipwiri at Mount Mlanje.[2] These groups, except for Kawinga, still occupy the same positions to-day. At this time most of the movement into Nyasaland had ceased, and the Yao invaders had already set themselves up as rulers over the indigenous Nyanja. At the same time the Ngoni were making frequent forays into the Shire Highlands and the rest of Southern Nyasaland, so that the position was far from stable.

The distribution of the Yao to-day reflects the history of their movement into Nyasaland. The districts nearest and fanning out from the point of entry into Nyasaland, viz. the area due east of Fort Johnston, contain the largest proportion of Yao. The more distant the districts are, the smaller the proportion of Yao in them.

The Entry of the Missionaries

The Missionaries were the first Whites to settle in Nyasaland. When he was in Britain in 1858, Livingstone had recommended the Shire Highlands as a suitable place for the establishment of a Mission. Inspired by his reports, the Universities Mission to Central Africa was founded, and in 1861 Dr. Mackenzie was sent out to establish the Mission. It was an ill-starred venture.[3] From the sociological point of view its significance is that it

[1] Waller, *Last Journals*, 109.

[2] MacDonald, D., *Africana or The Heart of Heathen Africa*, Simpkin Marshall (London, 1882), i, 31.

[3] Rowley, H., *The Story of the Universities Mission to Central Africa, from its commencement under Bishop Mackenzie, to its Withdrawal from the Zambesi*, Saunders, Otley & Co. (London, 1866), and *Twenty Years in Central Africa*, Wells Gardner, Darton & Co. (London, 1889), 3rd Edition.

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initiated the relationships of Black and White in Nyasaland; and its failure was partly a result of the ambivalent attitude to colonial peoples at that time. The people of Britain were horrified at the cruelties of slavery, but the Mission drew upon itself severe public censure because it took up arms against the Yao slavers in its vicinity. The Mission had to face a very difficult problem. It was ostensibly a teacher of the Gospel. Yet about it the Yao were performing deeds of violence, robbery and murder, and were taking slaves from the Nyanja inhabitants in the area. At the same time hundreds of fugitives and runaway slaves were seeking protection at the Mission. To take in fugitives and runaway slaves was, in African eyes, as political an action as to take physical action against the slavers. Should the Mission close its eyes to these un-Christian barbarities, since they were a part of the secular life of the people, or should it take action against them? Livingstone had had no compunction in releasing slaves, and the U.M.C.A. followed his lead, and not only took in fugitives but actually carried out assaults on parties of slave-raiders. This was the time when the first of the Yao groups under Mpama and Kapesi were penetrating into the highlands. The indigenous Nyanja, whose political and military organization was very weak, ranged themselves around the Missionaries, and tried to use them against the Yao invaders. The situation soon developed into a struggle between the Missionaries and the Yao slavers, in which the Nyanja headmen played very little part. Disaster followed upon disaster, and eventually the Missionaries decided that it would be politic to withdraw from the highlands and allow the situation there to stabilise before they returned. In Britain, however, public opinion had been roused by their militant treatment of the slavers, and the Mission, after losing three of its members, including Bishop Mackenzie, through illness, was moved to Zanzibar in 1862.

After 1862 there were a few expeditions to Nyasaland, but none of great political importance. In 1876, a second and this time successful settlement was made in the Shire Highlands. The Church of Scotland founded a Mission in Blantyre, which comprised a lay section of artisans and a clerical section of preachers. It was particularly careful that any political action should be taken by the lay, and not by the clerical, members,

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became it was anxious to avoid the censure which its earlier colleagues had suffered. This Mission also felt it could not stand by and see cold murder done in front of its eyes. Yet fugitives came to it as they had to the U.M.C.A., so that the Mission, despite its unwillingness, was inexorably drawn into political relationships with the Yao in the area. The lay members severely punished certain wrongdoers. Eventually an African was murdered at the Mission. They tried the murderer, found him guilty, and allowed a local headman to execute him. The Home Authorities looked upon this action as a trespass from the Mission's proper function. The Mission suffered severe public censure, and several of the lay members were dismissed. It was clear that a Mission in the Territory could not be a mission alone; it could not escape the political implications of the situation, and for the success of its venture some civil authority had to be established.

The Establishment of British Rule

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In the meantime Livingstone's publications were bringing the horrors of the slave-trade home to the people of Britain, and more and more pressure was exerted to bring it to an end. As a result, in 1878, Captain Elton, the Consul at Mozambique, obtained permission to conduct an expedition to Lake Nyasa to enquire into the slave-trade. The British population in the Shire Highlands was now increasing so much that in 1883 a British Consul was appointed. From then on, until the close of the century, Britain followed a militant policy against all slave-traders, amongst whom were the Yao. No active steps were taken to institute a formal government over the territory, until in 1889 the Portuguese appeared at the confluence of the Ruo and Shire Rivers with a large military expedition which they maintained was scientific. Accordingly, on November 21st, 1889, the Acting-Consul declared the territory north of the Ruo to be a British Protectorate. The next year, Mr. A. Sharpe made treaties with most of the Native chiefs in the area. These treaties were later ratified by the Anglo-Portuguese convention of June 1891. It is clear that the British Government was protecting the treaty chiefs against the slave-raiders, and ensuring that no other European power assumed responsibility for this service.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT? Yao FT?

The pacification of Nyasaland after this was largely the suppression of the slave-trade. The Commissioner of the Protectorate (H. H. Johnston) wrote in 1891: 175 648

> I felt bound to make our Protectorate of Nyasaland a reality to the unfortunate mass of people who are robbed, raided and carried into captivity to satisfy the greed and lust of the Yao race, those again being incessantly incited to engage in internecine war and slave-raiding forays by the Arab and Swahili slave-traders who travel between Nyasaland and the German and Portuguese littoral. The big men in this part of the Protectorate with whom it behoved me to deal and whom I must either persuade or coerce into acceptance of an anti-slave policy and sufficient subservience to the new administration as would put an end to further civil wars and inhumane practices, were the following:
>
> Makanjila and Kasumbe, ruling on opposite coasts of the south end of Lake Nyasa.
>
> The Makondanje clan of chiefs (Tchimdumbe, Zarafi, Nkata) which dominates the country between the east bank of the upper Shire, Lake Pamalombe and the Portuguese boundary.
>
> *Mponda*, the powerful chief holding the Shire where it leaves Lake Nyasa, and possessing a large tract of country along its western bank.
>
> The Angoni chief Tchikusi, who dwells behind Mponda.
>
> Tchingwalo-ngwalo and Mwemwa, Yao chiefs along the western bank of the upper Shire, half-brothers and brave haters of Mponda.
>
> *Liwonde*, chief ruling an exceedingly rich tract of land along the east bank of the upper Shire.
>
> Tchikusi, the great Angoni chieftain dominating all the hill country between the west bank of the Shire and the Portuguese frontier.
>
> Kawinga, one of the most powerful of the Yao chiefs who dwells near the north-west corner of Lake Shirwa and who commands a great slave-route to the coast, and lastly
>
> Tchikumbu, who after being for ten years a roving bandit living on the plunder of the missionary caravans between Blantyre and the upper Shire, has at last settled down on Mount Mlanje to a steady career of slave-trading.[1]

Except for the two Angoni, all the chiefs mentioned are Yao, and three of them, Jalasi, Kawinga and Liwonde, were forbears of the chiefs in whose areas I made my study. The history of the Administration's activities of the next five years is almost

[1] *Papers relative to the Suppression of Slave Raiding in Nyasaland.* C. 6639 (1891). Commissioner Johnston to the Marquis of Salisbury, Nov. 24th, 1891.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FT7 Yao FT7

mainly a story of the subjugation of this list of chiefs. Acting-Commissioner Sharp wrote in his annual report in 1897: "The Yaos . . . were the chief slave-raiders for the Arabs, and in consequence nearly all our expeditions for 1891 to 1895 were undertaken against various sections of this tribe."[1] The British South Africa Co. had made available a sum of £10,000 a year for providing a police force. As early as 1891, a raid was made on Cikumbu, a Yao slave-trader who had attacked a European coffee plantation in the Mlanje area. After this, there was a continual series of punitive expeditions against various native groups, usually after some slaving incident which precipitated British action. Captain Maguire was killed in 1892 by Makanjila's men, and shortly afterwards the British forces suffered a reverse at the hands of Jalasi. Unsuccessful attacks had been made on Kawinga's stronghold at Chikala. In 1895, two contingents, each of 100 Sikhs, arrived, and with this force more active measures were taken to control the slave-route to Quilimane through Mlanje district. In 1894, the Yao chief Makanjila was attacked and thoroughly defeated. In 1895, there was a concerted effort by the chiefs Kawinga, Jalasi and Matipwiri to oust the British from the Highlands. This commenced with an attack by Kawinga on the friendly chief Malemia, in Zomba area. A force was sent to protect the Missionaries at Domasi, and it stopped the main onslaught. After that, the stronghold of Chikala was scaled and Kawinga completely dislodged. He retreated to the east, and Matipwiri and his relative Mwimanje were captured. The power of these chiefs was completely broken and no more expeditions were necessary. In 1896, Kasili, a neighbour of Jalasi's, was captured and in the same year Liwonde, who had so far eluded capture, was apprehended and sent as a political prisoner to Chiromo in the extreme south of the Protectorate.

In the meantime the Portuguese were making similar punitive expeditions into the region due east of the Protectorate, and many refugees came into the Territory from Portuguese East Africa. Notable amongst these were the Mpotola groups under Chikweo and Ngokwe, who are to-day settled near Lake Chiuta.

In those parts of the Territory where military action was no longer necessary the framework of the Administrative system was

[1] *Annual Report*, 1896. C. 8438, p. 12.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

were enacted. As early as 1893 the Protectorate was divided into Administrative divisions and Collectors were appointed in each. Coinage was issued; a hut tax of 3s. was introduced; European claims to land and mineral rights were settled with the chiefs—all large estates were issued with certificates of claim; and a postal system was initiated. The old order of independent chiefdoms had gone for good and the Africans had to adjust their way of living to a new order.

The Village as a Unit in pre-White Times

Though there are earlier records of villages among related tribes, the earliest we have of the Yao are those of Livingstone.[1] In the records of his journeys up the Shire and the Rovuma Rivers, he notes that the people lived in villages. Rowley's reports[2] of the Shire Highlands in 1861 show that the Nyanja were organized in villages similar to those of to-day, but the best reports on the Yao village are by Duff MacDonald, who worked as a missionary in the Shire Highlands and the Zomba area from 1878 to 1881. Duff MacDonald published both a general ethnographic account of the Yao around Blantyre and a journal of day-to-day events on the mission. From these descriptions we are able to reconstruct much of the political organization of Yao groups before the Whites came to Nyasaland. Though the information from these early accounts about the internal structure of villages is scant, the reports of the importance of domestic slavery are good, and this is valuable in assessing its effect on the internal structure of modern Yao villages.

From MacDonald's description it appears that each Yao chiefdom was a congeries of almost autonomous villages. The headmen of these villages recognized the superiority of one of their number whom we may call 'chief'. The unity of each village and its corporateness were expressed in many ways. One of these was in connection with the worship of ancestor spirits. MacDonald writes:

> [The village headman] is the recognized high priest who presents prayers and offerings on behalf of all that live in his village. . . . It

[1] Livingstone, D. and C., *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi and its Tributaries, and of the Discovery of Lakes Shirwa and Nyassa. 1858-64*, John Murray (London, 1865). Waller, *Last Journals*.

[2] Rowley, *The Story of the Universities Mission*.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

is his relatives that are the village gods. Everyone that lives in the village recognizes these gods but if anyone removes to another village he changes his gods. He now recognizes the gods of his new chief. One wishing to pray to the god (or gods) of any village naturally desires to have his prayers presented through the village chief, because the latter is nearly related to the village god, and may be expected to be better listened to than a stranger.[1]

In this quotation the word 'chief' is used for village headman. In Yao the same term is used for both the chief of the country and the chief of the village (*mwenye*).

It is clear from MacDonald's description that foreign villages were looked upon as undifferentiated wholes. When discussing punishment in general he writes:

We find that almost every offence may be punished by death, but when an offender is not redeemed, the particular punishment is left to the headman of the injured party. For instance, if a headman of Kompamo's go and say, 'Chinyono has killed a subject of mine; I have caught a subject of his and want to kill him,' the chief's answer will be, 'He has done you wrong, do according to your heart (*poli mtima wewe*).' The punishment is thus inflicted not by the criminal's own chief, but by the injured party, and it may fall, not on the guilty person, but on one connected with him.[2]

For example, he describes how some children had been carried off from Che Lomoni's village one night in 1880.

Towards the end of 1880 [he recounts], Che Lomoni, a Blantyre headman, captured two men from Mpingwi, and put them in slave-sticks. They belonged to the village that had kidnapped the children a few months before, and native law did not require proof that the men were personally guilty. They were undoubtedly innocent. Still they were kept in close confinement till their friends returned the captives in February.[3]

The village headman—called the 'owner of the village' (*anyene mun*)—was the representative of the village in all public transactions, and also the representative of such higher authority as existed, to the village members. Duff MacDonald writes: 'A chief represents and is responsible for all his people. If anyone wish to treat with a native village it is with the village

[1] MacDonald, *Africana*, i, 65.
[2] MacDonald, *Africana*, i, 186.
[3] MacDonald, *Africana*, ii, 234.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 F77 Yao F77

chief that he must deal. If we give a present to a village it is to the village chief that we must give it'; and, 'It is when a man transgresses against his own village chief that *personal responsibility* is brought home to him. When he transgresses against another village, his own chief pays for him.'[1] The village headman accepted liability for offences committed by his villagers against members of other villages, but could punish his own villagers by fines and by putting them into slave-sticks. Within the village, according to MacDonald,

> The headman cannot make his villagers hoe his farm for him, or do such private work. Neither does he exact tribute from them. . . . Still he expects them not only to stand by him in war, but to support his government on all occasions, and to render special assistance in the trial of judicial cases. . . . He may pronounce a capital sentence, or order as large a penalty as the fine of four slaves—especially if he be a higher headman. But his judgements may be complained of by any of his free subjects (only such appeals are rare, unless by parties that want to leave his village altogether). His decision may be revised by some other headman, as the ruler of the village from which his own settlement broke off; but the ultimate appeal is to the chief of the country. While the village headman settles all smaller disputes without troubling the chief, he usually reports graver cases.[2]

The Chief and the Village Headmen: the Political Process

The village headmen in any particular area recognized the superiority of one of their number, the chief of the land (*anyene ntambo*). MacDonald classifies the headmen under one chief as follows:

1. Chief's blood relatives, usually called 'younger brother'.
2a. Settlers or refugees (*alamki*) who have come over with a large following from a hostile chief.
2b. Men who have gained the chief's favour by their services and been sent to occupy new spots in the kingdom.

'Other village headmen arise when a large village increases and sends forth smaller hamlets.'[3] All in the territory of a chief were integrated by a chain of authority. As he explains,

> 1. Headmen are under higher headmen and under the chief.

[1] MacDonald, *Africana*, i. 186. Original italics.
[2] MacDonald, *Africana*, i. 153. [3] MacDonald, *Africana*, i. 156.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

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2. Free men are under their elder brother in the first instance, but they may carry their cases to the headman of their village or even to the chief of the country.
3. Slaves were entirely under their own master.[1]

The headmen's subservience to the chief is described in the following passage:

[651] [646 913] [721] [47]

In all public transactions the headman represents his village. He receives the chief's orders and sees them carried out. When he kills an elephant he sends one of the tusks to the chief. Should he kill twenty elephants he is not expected to give up twenty tusks—two or three would be sufficient. If he shoots a large buck he gives one haunch of venison. For all such tributes he expects to receive in return a present (generally a little powder). . . . He is expected to attend the chief's parliaments unless he is under an elder brother in which case he is not allowed to speak, except when especially commissioned. Headmen are expected to report all cases of war, but they often attack enemies without telling their chief beforehand, saying, 'Let him hear of the enterprise when it succeeds.' Yet this is dangerous unless they are sure of success, and well acquainted with the chief's private sentiments. On reporting an attack they present the chief with part of the booty. In times of war each headman when summoned, must follow his chief's flag, otherwise his village is burned down, and all that fail to escape are killed or enslaved.[2]

175 578 622 643

Yet within the framework of this organization villages were markedly autonomous. MacDonald's description, which I have just quoted, brings this out very well. Elsewhere he writes: 'The chief may often have less influence than powerful headmen, and we have known cases where he simply contented himself with grumbling when his headmen acted contrary to his desire.'[3] The chief did not differ greatly from his more powerful headmen. A certain amount of ritual in terms of ancestor worship embellished his position, and he had some ascendancy over village headmen to whom he had given land. Yet, in the last analysis, the chief had to rely on his personal following and military power to subjugate headmen who were becoming too powerful. The chief was therefore in direct competition with his subject village headmen, and involved in a constant struggle with them for followers. MacDonald describes how the chief himself was a

[1] MacDonald, *Africana*, i, 155.
[2] MacDonald, *Africana*, i, 157.
[3] MacDonald, *Africana*, i, 155.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FTT Too FTT

village headman and had to administer his slaves and relatives in his village in the same way as a village headman.' MacDonald shrewdly observes:

> Where the chief was anxious to interfere with his subordinates he generally consulted his own interest. He will say to a headman, 'I see that you have been behaving badly to that subject of yours. You cannot get on with him: he must leave you and come and dwell in my own village.' The chief thus secures another servant.[1]

Another writer observed, '*As a chief's power consists of the number of his subjects the loss of a man is a serious matter.*'[2]

A village headman also tried to strengthen his position against the chief and against other village headmen by attracting to himself as many followers and dependants as he could. The process whereby a man might increase his status is described as follows:

> However large the settlement may become, the man that is first in the field is the chief or headman. In course of time he adorns his position by acquiring wealth. He may shoot some bush and get possession of their skins. With these he goes to the Manganji country and buys slaves. An old person he obtains for a single skin, but a young slave costs two, and women cost much more than men. The female slaves thus bought are his junior wives and he keeps them busy in hoeing the farm, and all such female duties. The male slaves he employs in farming, building, making baskets, sewing garments and such masculine pursuits. He keeps all these persons strictly at their duties, and at the same time welcomes an opportunity of selling them as a profit. If his daughters were unmarried, he would give them slave-husbands. The natives aim at 'replenishing the earth and subduing it'. As it is no expense for them to rear families, they are all desirous to have many children.

Besides this increase of the village from the chief's own resources, there may be an accession of freemen. After the settlement is begun, a man may come to its founder and say, 'I wish to live with you.' The village chief gives him permission and calls him 'younger brother'. The newcomer brings his family, builds a house, and cultivates a farm in the same way as his chief. A freeman may leave his present chief and take up his abode with another, whose subject he becomes. His former chief has no longer any authority over him

[1] MacDonald, *Africana*, i. 154.
[2] MacDonald, *Africana*, i. 133-4.
[3] Hynde, R. S., 'Among the Machinga People', *The Scottish Geographical Magazine*, viii (1892), 636-63.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1965) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

whomsoever. But a man often decamps by night taking with him many slaves belonging to his fellow-citizens; he then goes to some influential chief who may be only too glad to give the fugitive ground and to establish him as a sub-chief. 'Persons who thus leave are detained by their former chief, who welcomes every opportunity of shooting or capturing them.'[1]

In this way village headmen, by increasing their following, increased their power against the chief. MacDonald records:

> When a person has acquired several villages, he becomes a higher headman, intermediate between the chief and the owner of a single village. Each headman lives in the village he likes best, and leaves his 'headmen' to manage his other villages. But a headman of great ambition often places his 'headmen' all around him, decides their cases, and practically governs a small kingdom of his own. If he lives far from his chief, one might suppose that he was quite independent. When a quarrel arises between the chief of the country and an important headman, the latter may rebel, and found a new kingdom, thus depriving the old chief perhaps of one-third of the villages in his dominions.[2]

MacDonald cites the case of Mkanda of Chiradzulu, who was at first a headman of Kabtgama's but rebelled, and went to live on the southern side of the mountain.[3] He also observes that on the other hand, 'a headman may keep up his chief's authority in a district that the latter could not otherwise hold'.[4] Elsewhere he says:

> In and around his own village the chief of the country is a terrible power, and his government is supported by the most prompt and severe punishments. But in distant parts of his dominions, where influential headmen live, he may be little known, although as a matter of theory he is supposed to settle all graver disputes even in remote villages.[5]

The history of the Yao chieftaincies in MacDonald's time, and as told to me by my informants, is that of constant division into independent chiefdoms. In the Zulu and Bemba polities a strong state structure included a pattern of civil war and the main-

[1] MacDonald, *Africana*, i. 147-8.
[2] MacDonald, *Africana*, i. 32.
[3] MacDonald, *Africana*, i. 157.
[4] MacDonald, *Africana*, i. 156-7.
[5] MacDonald, *Africana*, i. 154-5.

2: Mitchell E-S (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

essence of the whole state under a new king,[1] but the Yao political unity seems to have split into two factions when divisions appeared within them. The dissident faction left the parent chiefdom and established itself somewhere else as an independent entity.

The picture my informants have given me substantiates MacDonald's account, though his contact was mainly with Mangoche and not with Machinga Yao. My informants, however, placed greater emphasis than he did upon the importance of trade with the coast. A slave-trading trip was not a venture which the ordinary village headman could undertake with equanimity. The journey to the coast, to Quilimane or to Kilwa, was long and arduous, and strong military protection against bandits was needed. A caravan could only be sent by a chief or someone of like status, so that the coastal trade became the monopoly of the chiefs. Headmen who had ivory and slaves to send to the coast included them in the chief's caravan. When it returned, the headmen were able to collect calico and beads to the value of their contribution. Gun-powder also seems to have been a chief's monopoly. Thus, in fact, he did have some physical control over the military activities of his subject village headmen, since he could withhold supplies of gun-powder if he wished. But in a society where minor chiefdoms were inimically poised against each other, the maxim 'a chief without people is nothing' had much more significance than it has to-day: a village headman's ultimate sanction was that he could withdraw his support from one chief and give it to another.

The Effects of White Conquest

It was into a society thus organized that the first Missionaries came. I have already described how the Missionaries, by taking in runaway slaves, and by occasional armed combat, entered into political relationships with the chiefs. With the establishment of the Protectorate, the policy, clearly expressed in Sir Harry Johnston's letter,[2] was to stamp out slavery. This was done in numerous campaigns against the Yao chiefs[3] so that by

[1] See Gluckman, M., 'Succession and Civil War among the Bemba: An Exercise in Anthropological Theory', *Human Problems*, xvi (1954), 6-25.

[2] See *loc. cit.*, p. 29.

[3] See Chap. II, pp. 29-30.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FT? Yao FT?

that the superior British militia had completely subjugated all the Yao chiefs who had resisted them.

British power initially became merely an element in the political relationships of chiefs: they used it against their rivals, as Kalembo used it against Cingwalungwalu,[1] or Malemia against Kawinga. Yao chiefs did not unite in the face of their common enemy.[2] As the campaign against the slave-traders progressed, however, Yao chief after chief fell to superior British arms. They, who only a few years earlier were accepting the submission of refugees, themselves had now to 'grasp the leg of the White people'.

It is clear that they looked upon their submission to the Whites in much the same way as they looked upon the submission of refugees to themselves. To submit to a man was to accept slave or near-slave status. According to informants, Kawinga sent a large tusk of ivory[3] to the British as a placatory gift. His ceremonial knife, and the knives of his important headmen, were taken from them by Robert Codrington, Assistant Collector of the northern part of Zomba.[4] A chief with whom I was once discussing slavery expressed neatly the attitude of the Yao chiefs to their subjugation. He said: 'There is no slavery to-day—we are the slaves of the Government'. The chiefs who returned to the Protectorate, therefore, returned as subjects, and were fully aware of this. In the new regime, the former chiefs had to recognize a superior authority and the British Administration provided the framework within which the old rivalries had to be replayed.

The chief's position in relation to his subjects as a result of this catastrophic change was, of necessity, weakened. When the slave caravans stopped, the chief's source of wealth disappeared, and with it much of his power. He was no longer much wealthier than his subjects. The wants of the people could now be more easily satisfied by the numerous trading stores which

[1] Mitchell, J. C., 'The Political Organization of the Yao of Southern Nyasaland', *African Studies*, viii, 3 (Sept. 1949), 141–59.

[2] Johnston maintains that Matipwiri, Jalasi and Kawinga had planned a joint attack against the British in 1895. If this is so, the attempt was completely unsuccessful. See Johnston, H. H., *British Central Africa*, Methuen & Co. (London, 1897), 130. See p. 30.

[3] *The British Central African Gazette*, ii, 18 (Nov. 15th, 1895), reports that Kawinga sent in some ivory as 'indemnity' but was told to pay more and to send in 60 more guns.

[4] They are to-day in the Southern Rhodesia National Museum, Bulawayo.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT? Yao FT?

began to appear in the Territory. The chief in this situation had the same wants as his subjects but was in no way able to satisfy them. He was precluded by his position from becoming a labourer and thus securing a cash income, while his subjects, until recently dependent on his monopoly for their wealth, had been drawn into the new economy of the Protectorate and were comparatively affluent.

The cessation of warfare and slavery thus affected the prestige of the chiefs seriously. The Administration's policy was at first to impose a fine of guns on those who broke rules. In July 1894, for example, Chapola village on the south-west corner of Lake Malombe was fined 30 guns for being in possession of slaves.[1] Later the Administration introduced an ordinance requiring the registration and licensing of guns, and many guns were confiscated on account of breaches of this regulation. Not only were the Yao disarmed, but the Administration also punished those who broke the peace. At the same time the Government was pursuing an active policy against domestic slavery. For example, in the village of Chapola mentioned above, 26 slaves were released. The slaves, formerly bound to their masters by the physical sanction of being liable to death at his hands in cases of desertion, were now liberated. It is not surprising to find the Collector at Mlanje reporting, in 1895, that the power of Kuntirimanja and Matipwiri was failing, and that they were losing people.[2]

Statements of informants confirm that slaves were then starting to leave their erstwhile masters to set up villages of their own. In 1904, the Administration reported: 'The tendency is for the old large communities to be broken up; for the small man to collect a surrounding of friends and go off and build new hamlets in other localities'.[3]

From my own investigations, there appear to have been two possible reasons for this. First, communities may formerly have lived in consolidated groups in order to protect themselves from slave-raiders and other assailants. With the disappearance of the slaver and of war, the bond of the need for security would,

[1] *B.C.A. Gazette*, i, 10 (July 28th, 1894).
[2] *B.C.A. Gazette*, ii, 8 (June 15th, 1895).
[3] *The Annual Report of the Territory, 1903–4*, quoted by S. S. Murray (ed.), *Handbook of Nyasaland*, Crown Agents for the Colonies (London, 1932), 188.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1969) 1956 FTT Yao FTT

therefore, be weakened, and the component parts of the village scattered. This is what the Administration argued when it wrote about the split-up of communities: 'This tendency is to some extent gratifying, in that it originates in the native's sense of his complete security under the existing Government.'[1] I have not much evidence that this is true, and in fact do not think it is. Second, there is little doubt from my village histories that the slave-groups attached to various village headmen were deserting their former masters and setting up independent villages.

It is significant that the report speaks of the 'old large communities'. Duff MacDonald, writing of the Blantyre area in the period 1877-81, says: 'Usually the natives live in small villages containing 10 or 11 huts, occasionally in large villages containing three times as many. They do not like to pack themselves closely. In time of peace five villages contain more than 100 people.'[2] Hynde, writing of the Domasi area, says: 'Sometimes a village contains only of five or six huts; more commonly twelve or twenty and rarely above thirty. The chief's village at Domasi contains of more than 100 houses but that is an exceptional case. The villages occur at intervals of quarter to one mile.'[3] In July 1895, the Collector at South Nyasa made a census of all the villages on the west bank of the Shire (64 villages). These were mainly Yao, but also included some Nyanja. The modal size of villages, calculated from his published figures, is 26 huts.[4] The reports of MacDonald and Hynde agree well, although they describe different areas. The Collector's average was slightly larger, but one is not sure that he has not included two or three settlements under one headman. A village, Changali, was marked as having 217 huts, but a note indicated that they were scattered. Also the numerical accuracy is not above question because a large proportion of hut totals end in 0 or 5, indicating estimation rather than enumeration. From my own observation, the arithmetic mean of a sample of 37 villages in two separate areas was 11 huts (mode was 8 huts).

It seems, therefore, that the optimum size for Yao villages has always been about 10 to 15 huts, and that the disintegration

[1] *Annual Report of the Territory, 1911-12*, Murray, *Handbook*, 128.
[2] MacDonald, *Africana*, i. 145.
[3] Hynde, R. S., 'Among the Machinga People'.
[4] *B.C.A. Gazette*, ii. 3 (Sept. 1895).

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 F'27 Tao F'27

used by the Administration in 1912 was to foist the break-up of larger communities under important village headmen. These communities were, as is evident from MacDonald's writings, largely made up of slaves and their descendants. In the light of the internal structure of modern villages, I believe that the fragmentation going on at that time was due to the breaking of the bond between captor and slave—a bond formerly reinforced by physical sanctions that included the killing of a slave by his captor. Therefore, while the groups thus linked to the headmen may have moved out of his village, his matrilineal kinsmen, who were bound to him by bonds of deep sentiment and religious beliefs, remained. The irreducible 10 to 15 huts were therefore likely to have been those of the headman's own matrilineal kinsmen. When the Administration ascribed the continuing tendency all over the Protectorate to the splitting up of villages into small family groups[1] it was probably describing the splitting off of descendants of slave-wives to found villages of their own. While this process of readjustment was going on, the Administration stepped in with legislation designed to control what it considered to be unchecked social disorganization. The Administration spoke of the necessity to

> build up an organization to control the rising generation of natives who, finding themselves without the restraining influences to which their parents were accustomed, have of recent years evinced an inclination to emancipate themselves from the disciplinary responsibilities of village life and obedience to authority, and to adopt habits prejudicial to native family life.[2]

To accomplish this task the Government introduced the District Administration (Natives) Ordinance of 1912. This was the Ordinance about which the Administration wrote in 1913:

> Framed, as it has been, in accord with native ideas and practice, it is a measure which none the less avoids the defects of the archaic system of tribal rule and which has as its aim the gradual formation of a subsidiary local government by means of Sectional Councils of Headmen chosen as far as possible by natives themselves and presided over by the District Resident.[3]

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[1] *Annual Report, 1911–12*, Murray, *Handbook*, 128.
[2] *Annual Report on the Protectorate for 1912–13*, Murray, *Handbook*, 129.
[3] Murray, *Handbook*, 129.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

Under this Ordinance, the Administration provided first of all for the formation of 'villages'. A Rule made under Section 3 of the Ordinance and published in Gazette Notice No. 113 of 1913, gave the Resident the power to concentrate the native population, where necessary, into organized villages of not less than 20 huts and to disallow the erection of isolated huts. 'In order to give effect to this policy the erection of new huts was to be confined to existing villages, and the occupants of isolated huts were to be instructed to remove, as opportunity offered, to an approved village.'[1]

The Ordinance then proceeded to create a line of authority from the District Resident to the villagers through Village Headmen and Principal Headmen. Districts in the charge of Residents were divided into Administrative Sections. A Principal Headman was put in charge of each. The Sections in turn were sub-divided into Village areas (groups of villages), each in the charge of a Village Headman.

Under the Ordinance, Principal Headmen and Village Headmen were given specific duties and responsibilities in their respective areas. The Principal Headman, for example, was:

> to be responsible for the good order of his Administrative Section, the maintenance of discipline, the reporting of crime and the apprehension of criminals, sanitation, the control of the movement of cattle, reporting outbreaks of epidemic disease, and for any other matters in the interest of law and order and the general welfare of the native community.[2]

The Principal Headman was also to 'secure the attendance at the Magistrate's court of natives whose presence was required in connection with deceased estates, remittances, government labour and so on, and to exert his influence to accelerate the payment of hut and poll taxes'. These duties in turn devolved upon Village Headmen—they were responsible for their smaller areas as the Principal Headmen were responsible for the larger.

Unfortunately we have no information about the way in which Principal and Village Headmen were chosen. Murray records that

> Residents were not necessarily to recommend those natives who had hitherto been recognized as Chiefs or Headmen. It was considered

[1] Murray, *Handbook*, 132.

[2] Murray, *Handbook*, 130.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

that in some cases the previous records or age of such persons would be found to be such as to preclude their selection to transact the responsible duties of Headmen under the Ordinance, and in such circumstances Residents were to consider the claims of other natives of good standing, intelligence and reputation residing in the section, who, having assisted the Resident in native administrative matters in the past, might be expected to carry out the duties efficiently, and who, at the same time, were known to enjoy the confidence of the natives with whose supervision they were entrusted.[1]

Elsewhere Murray writes, 'The system introduced by the Ordinance was in no way intended to revivify or perpetuate government by native chiefs. The position of Principal Headmen under the Ordinance was in no sense to be similar to the archaic one of the chief.'[2] Yet in the area in which I worked it was precisely the traditional chiefs who were made Principal Headmen—Jalasi, Nyambi, Kawinga, Liwonde and Malemia. In retrospect it is difficult to see how it could have been otherwise. Considering the sentiments attached to the chief in Yao society, it seems scarcely possible to conceive of leaders who 'enjoyed the confidence of the natives with whose supervision they were entrusted' who were not chiefs in the traditional sense.

In spite of its avowed intentions not to 'revivify or perpetuate government by native chiefs', the Administration proceeded to invest the traditional chiefs with its own power. 'Residents', Murray writes, 'were to indicate carefully by their attitude towards and dealings with Principal Headmen the fact that they were officially recognized as chiefs of their respective sections and that, as such, they were entitled to the respect and obedience of their people.'[3]

It would be wrong to imagine that the military actions at the end of the last century had completely destroyed chieftainship. Those who had resisted the Whites were driven out of British Territory but were allowed to return very soon afterwards. These chiefs then took up the threads of their life as best they could under the changed conditions. The degree to which the new Administration had become a force in Yao politics is illustrated by an entry in the District Book in Zomba. Kawinga III had died in August 1905, and the record reads: 'There were two

[1] Murray, *Handbook*, 131.
[2] Murray, *Handbook*, 130.
[3] Murray, *Handbook*, 130.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

claimants to the succession, Kumlomba and Chiwalo. Their claims were really very equal and His Majesty's Commissioner (April 1906) called in Kumlomba and the most important headmen and decided the succession by their vote.' District Books have many entries dating before 1912 showing that the Administration did not consider chiefs and village headmen insignificant.

The appointment of village headmen needed the approval of the Provincial Commissioner, but presumably the recommendation came from the District Resident. It is reasonable to suppose that the District Resident in turn had discussed appointments with the principal headmen. Whatever the mechanics of the appointment, however, the outcome was that most village headmen who held positions of prestige in the indigenous system of ranking became village headmen under the Ordinance.

The District Administration (Natives) Ordinance thus made official the unofficial relationship which had previously existed between the Administration and the chiefs and the village headmen. The traditional relationship of chief to village headman and village headman to villager, however, became suffused with a new significance. These relationships had become part and parcel of the extensive administrative organization of the British Empire.

The Modern Administrative Structure[1]

The Native Authority Ordinance of 1933 and the Native Court's Ordinance provide the legislative framework for the modern administrative system. Under Section 23(*a*) of the Native Authority Ordinance, the rules, orders, proclamations, notices and appointments made under the District Administration (Natives) Ordinance were not repealed. The duties which had so long been incumbent upon chiefs and village headmen, therefore, continued unaffected.

The chief, however, was set up at the centre of a bureaucracy and given autonomy in a number of directions. The Native Court's Ordinance gave him legal powers to inflict punishment on his subjects; the treasury under his authority could raise

[1] I have dealt in some detail with the position of the chief in the modern situation in my article 'Political Organization of the Yao of Southern Nyasaland'.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

claims to primacy, and by the ideology of the kinship system is equivalent in status. In Jalasi's area, once again, the indigenous status of the chieftaincy is shown by the Administrative recognition of Jalasi against Mkumba, who was a minor chief, and Namwera, who had come to 'ask land from Jalasi', and who had to give some slaves and some ivory for his chieftaincy rights in the area.

The relationships of Native Authorities to each other to-day are thus fixed partly by the Administrative structure, and partly by their historical backgrounds, and I have indicated that the structure the Administration imposed in the Yao areas was very largely determined by the indigenous structure which existed at that time.[1] The Administrative system to-day, therefore, supports the traditional structure.

The five chiefdoms with which this study is concerned stretch from Zomba in the south, almost to Fort Johnston to the north-east of the Shire River. These chiefdoms are Malemia in the north of Zomba district, whose area lies along the Malosa range of mountains north of Zomba as far as Mount Chaoni. Liwonde district stretches from Mount Chikala and Mount Chaoni in the south to Mount Msili in the north. This district contains the chiefdoms of Liwonde and Kawinga and the minor chieftains under them. In Fort Johnston district which stretches from the north of Mount Msili to Lake Nyasa are the chiefdoms of Jalasi, Nyambi, Katuli, Makanjila and an Nyanja chief Nankhumba. The chiefdoms of Jalasi and Nyambi abut those of Kawinga and Liwonde, and it is with these that we are mainly concerned.

Malemia, whose clan-name is *amwale*, was apparently the first of the Machinga chiefs to move into present-day Nyasaland from present-day Mozambique.[2] His group moved south-west past the north end of Lake Chiuta and settled for a while on Mount Msili. Malemia was closely followed by Nkata, from whom the Jalasi chieftaincy developed and whose clan-name was *ambewe*, and his 'father' Mkumba, who moved in westwards past the north end of Lake Chiuta into the Mangoche Highlands. Here, together with the help of Kawinga and Liwonde, they attacked the so-called Mangoche chiefs (Mlumbe, Chikowi, Kapeni,

[1] Chap. II.

[2] The history of this chieftaincy is set out more completely in 'An Outline of the Social Structure of Malemia Area'.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

631 643 175 Matipwiri, etc.), displaced them southwards and so established chiefdoms of their own. Mkumba moved to the south and Nkata set up a fortress on Mount Mangoche, from which vantage-point he resisted British conquest for many years. Kawinga and Liwonde, whose clan-name was also *ambewe*, had moved in with Nkata but continued across the Shire River to settle in the Kongwe Hills to the west of Lake Malombe. Later, Kawinga and Liwonde re-crossed the Shire and moved south-eastwards until they reached Mount Chikala. This in the meantime had been occupied by Malemia. Kawinga and Liwonde succeeded in dislodging Malemia who retired to the Malosa Range, where he is situated to-day. Liwonde then left the mountain to settle on the east shore of the Shire River.

631 643 The arrangement of these particular chiefdoms in Administrative districts therefore reflects the social relationships among the chiefs. Between Malemia and the two *ambewe* chiefs, Kawinga and Liwonde, there is an uninhabited forest reserve and a mountain range. [611] Liwonde and Kawinga who can trace their descent matrilineally from a common ancestress and who are to-day perpetual [1] brothers, together with their minor chiefs, share the Liwonde district. In spite of the opposition of these two chiefs which arises from their position as chiefs of independent chiefdoms, they sometimes meet and visit each other. Chiwalo, who from the Administrative point of view is under Kawinga, is in fact more closely related to Liwonde and has much more to do with him. But Chiwalo's headmen usually appeal to Kawinga, not Liwonde, in their difficulties. Within Kawinga's area at a funeral or an installation ceremony of an important headman in the northern areas, representatives of the nearby chieftaincies Ngokwe, Chikweo, Chiwalo and Kawinga will be present. In the south, the representatives of only Chamba, Mposa and Kawinga are likely to be present. Headmen, if they come from Liwonde's area, do so because of kinship connection and not because they are representatives of Liwonde.

The relationships of Jalasi and to some extent Nyambi, with Kawinga and Liwonde, are much more distant. Kawinga and Liwonde stand opposed to Jalasi in spite of the fact that Jalasi shares their clan-name. I have never known of Jalasi coming to visit Kawinga or Liwonde. Jalasi's area extends well down

[1] i.e. the offices are fixed perpetually in this relationship. See p. 122.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

643 him about the laws it intends to introduce which affect his people. The Administration transmits new Ordinances and Regulations to the chief and he must then relay them to the village headmen. When it advises the chief of a new law it thereby advises the people of his chiefdom.

The Origin of Villages in Modern Chiefdoms

195 621 We have thus far been looking at the chiefdom as an organization of villages united by their common interests in and association with one chief. But the villages that compose the chiefdom are not all equally closely integrated into the political structure. This is most clearly seen against the background of how the modern chiefdoms came into being.

175 621 663 By the time that the 1912 Ordinance was introduced the social composition of the chiefdoms had undergone some change from what it was before the White conquest. Before the White conquest the Yao chiefs had overcome the indigenous inhabitants of Southern Nyasaland. Some of these had been allowed to remain in the area as subjects. Others were enslaved. There were some Nguru, Nyanja and Mpotola village headmen who had come to seek the protection of the Yao chiefs.

175 621 166 During the conquest, the territory was thrown into confusion, and villages fled in abandon from their own into neighbouring chiefdoms both in Southern Nyasaland and Mozambique. When the Administration allowed the chiefs to return, most of the important village headmen and their followers returned with them. Kawinga, for example, was allowed to return, not to Mount Chikala but to the area immediately to the north of it. He brought back with him most of his important headmen who had fled with him to the country of the Mpotola chief Nkanyela, in Mozambique. Jalasi was allowed to return from Portuguese Territory in 1906,[1] not to his mountain fortress Mangoche, but to a smaller hill Sakalwe some miles to the east. He gathered round him a few of his important headmen.

When hostilities ceased, there was a certain amount of internal readjustment. Some villages which had fled to other chiefdoms in the Protectorate started to come back while others stayed behind. To-day there are villages here and there which had left their chiefdoms in the confusion and had then joined their present

[1] District Book, Fort Johnston.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

chiefs. Mpumbe's village, which in 1947 was about 2½ miles from Kawinga's court village Nanyumbu, was originally one of Jalasi's adherents. Mpumbe fled with many others when the British attacked Mangoche in 1896. He went to the place where Lake Amaramba spills into the Lujenda River in Portuguese East Africa. When things seemed more peaceful, Mpumbe did not return to Jalasi's area, but preferred to seek his son Ngongondo, who had fled with a section of the village to Kawinga's area. He found Ngongondo at approximately the present site of the village, and settled with him. Ngongondo later moved eastwards to his present home in the Liwonde area. Both village headmen have achieved a certain amount of prestige in their new chiefdoms. Mpumbe was once a court assessor of Kawinga, and now holds girls' initiation rights. They have lost all touch with their former chief and are most unlikely to return to him.

A considerable number of Kawinga's villages moved into Mposa's and Chamba's areas, when they returned to the Protectorate. Their descendants to-day say that they did so because the soil was better in those areas than in Kawinga's.

Shortly after the British expedition, i.e. between 1896 and 1900, the Portuguese Government launched a punitive campaign against the Africans along the Portuguese–Nyasaland boundary. Many thousands of refugees came pouring into the Protectorate. Most of these were Mpotola and Nguru. The great majority settled where they crossed the boundary, i.e. round Chiuta, and Ngokwe chiefdom arose from some of them. After the Portuguese campaigns ended many other migrants came into the area. All those I questioned gave Portuguese ill-treatment as the reason for their coming across.

During the first decade of the century the movement, as in the initial invasion, was predominantly south-westwards—from Lake Chiuta towards the Shire River and Highlands. Now, however, the movement is gradual. The first movement of a group may bring it just within the boundary. Then the next movement may take it to the south and west deeper into Nyasaland. Some of my village case histories show this. Table III sets out some movements within Kawinga–Liwonde area (except Chiwalo).[1] I asked about the place of origin of all the villages

[1] I use Kawinga–Liwonde area to include the chiefdoms Kawinga, Liwonde, Mposa, Chamba, Ngokwe, Chikweo and Chiwalo.

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

TABLE III

MOVEMENT OF VILLAGES WITHIN KAWINGA–LIWONDE AREA

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Losers:	*Gainers:* Ngokwe	Chikweo	Kawinga	Liwonde	Mposa	Chamba	Totals
Ngokwe .	—	—	7	2	—	—	9
Chikweo .	—	—	2	—	1	—	3
Kawinga .	—	—	—	27	1	20	48
Liwonde .	—	—	—	—	—	4	4
Mposa .	—	—	—	2	—	9	9
Chamba .	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals .	—	—	—	2	—	—	73 / 2

Totals above the diagonal represent movements south-westwards. Totals below the diagonal represent movements north-eastwards.

extant in Kawinga's section, which had arrived since the White conquest. My enquiries about the headmen who are recognized by Government were easy, but for those who are not recognized I had to rely on the memories of my informants and I know that many were left out. I am not aware of any bias, but realize that wide generalization from the figures is not safe. A glance at Map II shows that Ngokwe area is the most north-easterly area and Chamba the most south-westerly. The others are intermediate. Of the 75 villages only two had moved counter to this direction, i.e. from Mposa to Liwonde in a north-westerly direction.

I have no measure of the number of villages which have moved entirely out of the Kawinga–Liwonde area, either to other parts of Nyasaland or back to Portuguese East Africa. I have never heard of a village's moving back to Portuguese East Africa, though I have heard of their moving westwards and southwards, and of a few moving northwards.

In Table IV, I set out the origin of villages which have arrived in Kawinga–Liwonde area since the White conquest, and which are still there. This table shows quite clearly, that by far the biggest influx into these areas has been from Portuguese East

2: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1949) 1956 FT7 Yao FT7

TABLE IV

ORIGIN OF VILLAGES WHICH HAVE ARRIVED IN THE KAWINGA–LIWONDE AREA SINCE THE WHITE CONQUEST AND ARE STILL THERE

Origin	Ngokwe	Chikweo	Kawinga	Liwonde	Mposa	Chamba	Total
Northern Areas:							
Fort Johnston . . .	—	—	—	6	—	1	7
Nyambi	—	3	—	1	1	2	7
Jalasi	1	—	10	6	1	3	21
Southern Areas:							
Malemia and Ntumanje	—	—	—	8	7	28	43
Zomba	—	—	—	4	7	4	15
South of Zomba . .	—	—	—	2	1	3	6
Other Nyasaland Areas:	—	—	—	3	—	2	5
Port. E. Africa . . .	13	76	111	37	6	30	273
Unrecorded	—	—	—	2	1	31	34
Total	14	79	121	69	24	104	411

Africa. We have no record of how many villages have been lost to the Southern or Northern area from Kawinga–Liwonde area, so that we cannot evaluate the significance of the gain of 64 villages from Southern areas, and of only 35 from the Northern areas. The density of population in Malemia's area is 268 per square mile, and the average density of the Shire Highlands is about 156·6. It may well be that there is now a movement out of the Shire Highlands into the less densely populated Liwonde–Kawinga area.

THE PRINCIPLE OF PRIMACY

Migration and invasion have been the keynote of Machinga histories: village headmen recount with pride how their ancestors moved into Nyasaland with their bands of slaves and followers. 'The East' is the traditional home of the Yao and even young men who have never been there proudly say, 'We come from the East'. This sentiment is reflected in the belief that the rains from the east are beneficial and give rise to good crops, while the rains from the west are detrimental and cause

3: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1912) 1922 FT7 Yao FT7

That these several sections of the Wayao differ in many respects may be seen by comparing the Amangoche of *Africana*[1] with the Amachinga of this article. I am not sufficiently conversant with the Amangoche to make a definite statement on this point but I am inclined to believe that after longer residence and wider knowledge, Macdonald would have found that some of his statements needed revision. Those whom he considered the "Yao proper" but whom I prefer to speak of as the Amangoche seem to have a considerable mixture of Anyanja, since their language contains many Chinyanja words and many of their customs are practically those of the Anyanja. I am of the opinion that the Amachinga may be regarded as more typical of the Wayao, and except when ambiguity might arise, I shall speak of them as the Yao.

The original home of this Bantu speaking people is uncertain; in historic times all the sections of the Wayao were originally grouped in that part of Portuguese East Africa around the hill called Chao, whence they probably derived their name, *Wa Chao* or *Wa Yao*. About the middle of the nineteenth century, as the result of inroads by neighboring tribes of Aloko from the southeast, and raids by the Makwangala, a branch of the Angoni of Zulu origin, from the northwest, disruption of the Yao people occurred, and the divisions mentioned above, moved toward Nyasaland. The Masaninga branch settled for the most part along the eastern shore of Lake Nyasa but a sub-section known as Tambala Yao reached the west side of the lake. The Machinga made a settlement near Lake Chiuta under a number of old chiefs, including Malemya (Nalutumbo), Kawinga, Chenkula, Kalimbuka, and Maole.

The descents of the Makwangwala again caused the Wayao to move on from Chiuta to Naminga on the Mikoko stream. Here Malemya suffered another defeat at the hands of the Angoni; many of his people were driven off and taken to the neighboring Anguru country where they were held in captivity for some time. Finally they were restored by the enterprise of one of Malemya's old men, Kulungala, who went alone to the Angoni, saying that he wished to live with them and with his own brethren. One day, he asked the Angoni if they would like to see their captives dance, and when they assented, he called the Yao together, and clapping his hands to keep time, he began to sing one of their dance songs. Gradually he gathered all the Yao into the village open space, dancing and singing; then, keeping to the same air, he told them why he had come, using their own language which the Angoni did not understand. "Malemya, our chief, remains at the Mikoko stream. It is not far off. We must all join him again. Now dance for joy. If anyone does not return there, it is his own fault." Then, a few at a time, the dancers left the crowd and stole away into the bush and, as night came on, they all made off and reached Malemya's camp in safety.

Malemya's people were again attacked by the Angoni, and on this occasion they defeated their enemies. The Angoni retreated and skirting Zomba mountain, reached the Shiré

[1] Macdonald, *op. cit.*

3: Stanous D-5 (ca. 1912) 1922 FT7 Yao FT7

River at Mpimbi where they intended to settle. Here, an old *chief*, knowing that their presence would cause trouble, persuaded them by tales of many cattle far away on the other side of the river, to cross over, and there they remained.

Kawinga and Malemya, then, to avoid further raids from the north went down to the Upper Shiré River near Lake Pamalombe, Kawinga going to Mvera, while Malemya stayed on the east side of the river among the Anyanja, claiming friendship with them because they bore many of the same clan names. Later, Malemya moved up to the highlands about fifteen miles north of what is now Zomba, and Kawinga went to Chikala. Malemya was friendly with the Anyanja *chief*, Chenyani, who was of his clan, and was therefore able to buy from him for a red blanket all the country from the Likwenu stream to the Namadzi River, a district thirty to forty miles long. There he settled.

Kawinga was once again attacked by the Makwangwala from the north, but beat them back, after which they returned to the country whence they came — German East Africa near Lake Nyasa. The Angoni chief was killed in this battle, and the story goes that two Yao captives were told off to carry the eviscerated body back to the Angoni country for burial. As they were not provided with food for the journey, the two men began to eat the corpse. After several days, this was discovered; one of the men was killed but the other escaped to tell the tale. These were barbarous days, and the Yao relate that after raiding a village, the Angoni would leave a pot cooking on the fire with the body of a child in it, well covered with beans, so that when they had gone away with their booty and the villagers who had taken refuge in the forest returned hungry, they would start eating the beans and then come upon the body of the child, and having eaten of the juices of a human body, they would have committed a terrible sin.

The immigration of the Amachinga into the country around Mangoche mountain caused the Amagoche Yao settled there to move. They passed into the Blantyre and Mlanje districts, and invaded the country of the Anyanja. The *chief*, Malemya, known as Nalutumbo died about 1880, and was succeeded by his nephew, a sister's son, according to the Yao custom. This nephew, Wandalama, then took the name of Malemya.

In consequence of this succession, there was considerable bad feeling between Wandalama and the other aspirant to the chieftaincy, his cousin, Kumtaja. The latter moved down to the plain below Zomba mountain to the south, where he gathered about him a band of friends and malcontents. Malemya decided to attack him and with this purpose, sent two messengers, Nkopiti [1] and Mapondela, asking Chikusi and his Angoni to come and do the job for him. Led by Nyamuka, Njeremoli, and Kabayi, the Angoni came from the Shiré River opposite Blantyre, via Matope. They attacked and routed Kumtaja who, owing to the thick country, managed to fall back with most of his people toward Lake Chilwa. Here he was received by his cousin, Chimombo, a son of Nalutumbo, and father of my interpreter, Chonga, who ruled among the Anyasa. Afterwards, he moved to Mpimbi on the Shiré where he built a stockaded village.

[1] Died July 14, 1914.

3: Stannus D-5 (ca 1912) 1922 FT7 Yao FT7

After the defeat of Kumtaja, Chikusi and his Angoni routed Kumtumanja, a brother of Malemya, who had also been making a nuisance of himself. Kumtumanja, who suffered from a large hydrocoele, is supposed to have lost his balance on account of this impediment, and fallen into a stream where he had stopped to drink and to have been drowned.

The Angoni still burned for more warfare, and Malemya, fearing that with his work done, they might prove a nuisance to him, turned them on to the Amangoche Yao around Blantyre. Thither they set off on a raiding expedition and returned to their own country via Chiradzulu. This raid took place in 1884.

During the next few years, Kawinga, who had always held a grudge against Malemya for having got ahead of him to the best country, occupied the chief with raiding and warfare. In 189[illegible] Wandalama died, and was succeeded by Chisala, the son of his sister, Chisigure, and at the present time, he is the reigning Malemya.

It is of these Amachinga Yao under Malemya that the following notes are written. I have gone at some length into the history of these people in order to disarm criticism by those who, familiar with other sections of the Wayao, may not agree with all my statements.

Life History. Generally speaking, the life of the Yao native in the old days was full of ease spiced with the excitement of intertribal warfare. He cultivated his crops, kept a few goats and chickens, and relieved the monotony by hunting. Even domestic slavery was not a great hardship, nor did the Yao probably suffer from coast slave-raiding to the same extent as many other tribes. As children, they are wont to spend their days free from care, seldom reprimanded, and rarely or never physically chastised. During youth, the same easy lot is theirs, with the addition from time to time of a few small tasks; minor household duties for the girls, such as drawing water, sweeping the hut, and "minding" the baby, while the boys hoe or fetch and carry for their fathers in the village or in the bush. Left to their own devices, they play games,[1] dig out rats' nests, or shoot birds with bows and arrows.

Now, as formerly, when they are about five years old, the girls usually go to live with their grandmother who may thus have a number of children around her; or several girls of a somewhat more advanced age may sleep together in a hut dormitory. Boys of this age all live in a big hut called *nyumba ja chachanda*, "the boys' dormitory." This is their quarters until one by one they leave to get married. The girl, similarly, remains in the girls' dormitory or with her grandmother until she is taken in marriage.

Puberty. The first interruption of this placid life of youth is the onset of puberty or the first initiation ceremonies.[2] Formerly, these ceremonies took place after puberty but of late years, as is pointed out elsewhere, they are performed much earlier.

Child betrothal. Bethrothal in childhood or before birth is not uncommon. A woman learning that some friend of hers is pregnant will arrange that if a girl is born, her son will marry the friend's daughter, or a man taking a fancy to a little girl will select her as his

[1] Vide infra, p. 257. [2] Vide infra, p. 246.

6: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1947) 1949 FT7 Yao FT7

They do not form a representative sample though they were casually selected for study and are fairly well scattered in the district in which they are situated.

In all there were 762 men, women, and children normally resident in the hamlets. This represents about 1·2 per cent. of the total population of the area. By normally resident, I mean that these people are considered to be members of the hamlets, and if they were absent, were away on only short visits of, say, about a month.

I have thus counted polygynists as normal members of the hamlets, but have taken care to ensure that they were not included again if their second wives were in another hamlet of the groups studied. Men, women, and their children who had gone outside the area to seek work, for example, were not included.

The ages of all members of the population were estimated by relating the birth of the individual to some notable event, the date of which is known. In these hamlets it was always possible to find some old relative who could place the birth of younger people as occurring between notable events. After the two dates between which the birth occurred had been fixed, it was then possible to fix the date of birth more accurately by asking the older people to indicate the approximate size of the child at subsequent events, by picking out a suitably sized child in the village.

The following is the skeleton chronology used in this survey.

1870 Migration of Kawinga group from Kongwe Hill.
1881 First attack by the Makwangwara Angoni.
1884 Second attack by the Makwangwara Angoni.
1895 British attack on Mount Chikala, the stronghold of Kawinga.
1896 British attack on Mount Mangoche, the stronghold of Jalasi.
1905 Death of Kawinga of the Anthill.
1907 The departure of Mr. Hoare, Collector of Revenue, from the Chikala Station.
1908 Small-pox epidemic.
1913 Government regulations about the number of huts to a village (District Administration (Natives) Ordinance, 1912).
1914 Commencement of the First World War. This is a notable event because of the fighting in German East Africa, in which many Nyasaland African troops took part. Also many men were used as porters carrying war goods from the railhead to Fort Johnston on Lake Nyasa.
1918 End of First World War.
1919 Influenza epidemic.
1921 General famine. This is known locally as *sala sa Jim*, lit. 'the hunger of Jim'. Jim was an African Government clerk whose duty it was to dispense food to the starving populace.
1930 The coming of the famous *mchape* witchfinders. These people, trading on the beliefs of the population, induced practically the entire people to drink a potion to protect themselves from witchcraft. It is a most memorable event in the history of the area.[1]
1933 The introduction of Indirect Rule.
1940 The commencement of recruiting for the Second World War. The Liwonde district supplied a good proportion of men for the Army.
1946 End of the Second World War, i.e. the return of the soldiers.

The important thing about such a chronology is that the events should be deeply

[1] For details of this movement when it had penetrated to Northern Rhodesia, see A. I. Richards, 'A Modern Movement of Witchfinders', *Africa*, vol. viii (1935), pp. 448–61.

7: Hetherwick M-5 (ca. 1900) 1902 FT7 Yao FT7

SOME ANIMISTIC BELIEFS AMONG THE YAOS OF BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA.

By the Rev. Alexander Hetherwick, M.A., F.R.G.S., of the Blantyre Mission, British Central Africa.

175 The original home of the Yao tribe may be roughly described as the large and lofty plateau which lies to the east of Lake Nyasa, and is bounded by the Rivers Rovuma and Lujenda. Forty years ago, about the time that Livingstone first entered the country, they began to be pressed on the north by the Magwangwara, and on the east by the Makuwa tribes. These invasions caused them to move, some westward down to the shores of Laka Nyasa or the banks of the Upper Shire River, and others southward to the Shire Highlands, Mount Zomba and the eastern slopes of Mount Mlanje. In every case they succeeded in either subjugating or expelling the original Maravi or Mang'anja inhabitants of these districts, and in no case have they lost their own independence.

175 177 Till about fifty or sixty years ago the Yaos were untouched by any external influences, and when at that time the Arab and coast trader from Kilwa and Zanzibar began to treat and trade with them they appear to have been little affected by contact with these visitors. Only a few of the younger men aped at following Mahommedan tenets, and these they only grafted on to their still cherished belief in the old faiths of their fathers. The Koran, or a few of its texts, was added to the many other charms they had already hung about their necks. The faith which the first missionaries found them in possession of when they entered the country twenty-five years ago may therefore be held to be the unadulterated creed of the tribe from time immemorial.

174 The foundation of the Yao religion is to be found in the *liwalo*, the soul, shade or spirit which every human being possesses, and which is the inspiring agent in his life. They profess to give no definite description of the nature or characteristics of this soul. In their minds however it is allied with the shadow, and would seem to bear to the body the relation which a picture has to the reality. Their word for a shadow is *chiwilili*, which is also the term that they use to denote a picture, and pictures they associate with the shades or shadows of the dead. I have known natives refuse to enter a room where pictures were hung on the walls "because of the *masoka*, souls, which were in them." The photographic camera was at first an object of dread, and when it was turned upon a group of natives they scattered in all directions with shrieks of terror. "The European,"

8-Mitchell E-5 (1946-1947) 1949
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III. THE ENTRY Of The Whites

175 797 648 The first settlements in Nyasaland were in the Shire Highlands where a Church of Scotland Mission was built in 1876. In 1878 the African Lakes Company was founded to take over the trading activities of the Mission. As the White population grew the necessity for some non-missionary organization to regulate the relationships between Africans and the growing body of White settlers, who now included planters and traders as well as missionaries, became more and more pressing. Eventually in 1883 a British Consul was appointed. In 1891 to meet the activities of the Portuguese, a Protectorate was established and the military measures that had been proceeding against the slave traders were now intensified.

175 648 The military police used by the British authorities had arms which the Yao could not withstand, and even the most successful of Yao military groups was soon destroyed. Breech-loading rifles outshot the Yao's muzzle-loading guns and cannon were also used by the British in some actions. The British had a force of Sikhs well-trained in military manoeuvres. Even the previously impregnable Mount Cikala, so long held by Kawinga and his forces, was successfully assaulted. The superior arms of the British left an indelible impression on the Yao who had long conducted successful military campaigns, and in due course these arms came to be identified with the force of the value system of the Whites. One of the more immediate results of the success of White armaments was that certain Yao chiefs seized the initiative and used the British forces as a tool in their own political machinations. The history of the rise of Kalembo, although his country is outside the area of study of this paper, is interesting in this respect. Before the Whites came Kalembo, younger brother of Msamala, who was the father of the notorious Mponda, was an insignificant character. Just before the

8:Mitchell E-5 (1946-1947) 1949
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III. The Entry OF THE WHITES

175 648 British started actively to pacify the country, the sons of Mponda were at war with each other and Cingwalungwalu was on the way to dominating the whole of the west of the Shire River bank above the Murchison falls. After the British had demonstrated their efficiency by a few attacks on some of Nkata's forces, Kalembo approached the British leader and complained of the war in his territory. The British forces accordingly attacked and destroyed Cingwalungwalu's forces thereby leaving the way open for Kalembo to establish himself under the British wing as an important chief of the west bank of Lake Malombe. Amongst the chieftancies studied in this paper there appeared to have been no direct use of the British military forces in internal politics.[1] The Whites in this way immediately became a factor in tribal political organization. First of all some chiefs endeavoured to use the military force of the Whites directly in their tribal politics. Later on as military actions came to an end the power of the Whites continued to be tapped by chiefs and other personalities in the political structure in order to manipulate the tribal political set-up to their own advantage. In the main the power of the British Administration though still an active agent in tribal politics is now present as an abstract and invisible but nonetheless potent force. How this is done to-day I hope to be able to show by an analysis of the interaction of chiefs, African civil servants and village headmen.

101 175 619 643 As a foundation to this view of Yao politics, the detailed history of the three chieftains Kawinga, Liwonde and Nyambi is illuminating. Kawinga, Liwonde and Nyambi all belong to the same division of the Yao tribe, i.e. Macinga. There are about nine such divisions but only four are to be found in Nyasaland. The Acisi live near the Portuguese East African border in the Fort Johnston area (Katuli's area) and the

8:Mitchell E-5 (1946-1947) 1949 FT7 Yao FT7

[P.145C]

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[1] There is some evidence that Mgoua the son of Liwonde may have helped the British forces to subdue a neighbouring chief, Cumba the son of Kawinga.

101 Amasininga in the Makanjila area of Fort Johns-
619 ton District, i.e. to the east of the south end of
the Lake near Fort Maguire. These two divisions
● 175 are insignificant when compared with the other
643 two divisions in Nyasaland. The third division
is the Mangoce Yao now settled around Blantyre,
while the last division, the Macinga, are settled
between Fort Johnston district and Zomba.
These divisions arose from a breaking up of the
Yao tribe which originally occupied the territory
between the Rovuma and Lujenda Rivers in what
is now Portuguese East Africa. These divisions
are not very significant to-day. Members of a
division recognize that they are more closely
related to each other than to the members of
another division, but this does not appear to
affect modern political life in any way.

619 The first Kawinga, Liwonde and Nkata[1]
175 all belonged to the Macinga division which had
settled near the tip of Lake Amaramba where it
551 empties into the Lujenda River. From this place
643 of origin, the groups associated with these early
leaders moved into Nyasaland. In addition to
belonging to the same division of the Yao tribe
the three leaders mentioned also had the same clan-
name, viz. *asubene*.[2] The term that I have trans-
lated as clan-name is the Yao word *lukoryo*,
which may also be translated as "kind" or "sort".
Thus, if one asks a man the "kind" or "sort"
of Yao he is, his answer may refer to the major
divisions as above, i.e. Macinga or Mangoce
or it may refer to the clan-name. Clan-names are
inherited matrilineally, but holders of the same
name are unable to trace their descent from
[582] a common ancestor. People with the same clan-
names formerly did not marry but this prohibi-
tion has fallen away. For the commoners the
clan-name seems to have lost most of its signi-
ficance but it is carefully remembered in the royal
lines and lines in which the rank of a village head-
man is passed down.

643 The present Kawinga and the present Liwonde
551 can trace their descent matrilineally from a com-
175

643 551 175 [601] mon ancestress. The first Kawinga and the first Liwonde were maternal brothers and to this day Kawinga and Liwonde call each other "brother". Nyambi however was a sister's son of an early leader Mkumba who was the father of Nkata, and their clan-name was *mwilasi*. Nkata therefore called Nyambi "father".[3] Nkata was the first to move into Nyasaland and Mkumba and Nyambi followed afterwards. Later the Nkata name was dropped and an Arabic name Zarafi, corrupted to Jalasi, was substituted. Hence the present Jalasi calls the present Nyambi "father". Kawinga and Liwonde both call Nyambi *alamu*, or brother-in-law, it is said because one of the early Nyambi's married a woman who bore the clan-name of *imbewe*.

643 175 648 The groups under Kawinga and Nkata entered Nyasaland and gradually expanded until Jalasi, as he became known, dominated the area around Mount Mangoce in the present Fort Johnston District, and Kawinga, safely ensconced on Mount Cikala, dominated most of the area north of this point. Jalasi, Kawinga and Liwonde were heavily defeated by British forces in 1895–6 and driven out of British Territory. Later on they were allowed to return after they had been ordered to surrender and effectively disarmed. When they had returned, the chiefs were virtually ignored and as far as can be ascertained the effect of the British government was to destroy the power of the chiefs and substitute the system of British administration for theirs. Nevertheless, it is apparent from entries in the District Book that even though it were not the official policy, the administrating officers considered it important that the chiefs should maintain some power. Thus when Kawinga III died in August 1905 the District Book records: "There were two claimants to the succession, Kumlomba and Chiwalo. Their claims were really very equal and H. M. Commissioner (April 1906) called in Kumlomba and the most important headmen and decided the succession by their vote." The

643 175 648 report goes on to say that the newly elected chief Kumlomba "had been mad once and still has a weak looking face and is a weak man. He has no real influence with his people and is ruled by his young men's advice. He means well but does not act on his own ideas sufficiently."[1] This comment shows that even though the Administration may have acted on this occasion for the preservation of peace, to the Yao it seemed to be approving their indigenous institution in appointing the successor. Informants say that when Kawinga IV died in 1913 his successor Chiwalo, who was the unsuccessful claimant of the report in the District Book, was able to succeed to the name against some Yao opposition, because of his influence with the administration.

As early as 1903, only seven years after the last military action was taken against a Yao group, the position of the defeated chiefs in the new political structure was being considered. Thus the Report of the Protectorate 1903–1904 reads: "A somewhat difficult question for consideration is the extent of power which should be allowed to native chiefs. Before British influence was established a chief had unlimited powers of life and death, and was able to keep his people in order. He did so not by kindness, but through fear. At the present day, when chiefs are not allowed to use any of their old methods, the people formerly subject to them often refuse to obey or to take any notice of their directions. The tendency is for the old large communities to be broken up: for the small man to collect a surrounding of friends and go off and build new hamlets in other localities. There are very few chiefs in British Central Africa who are of great assistance to the Magistrate so far as judicial work goes. There are, of course, notable exceptions, but as a rule it is not safe to give any power to native headmen."[2] I feel that the view of chieftainship expressed in this report is erroneous and that the chief was never as powerful over all his subjects as the 1903 administration assumed. Also the break-up of large communities,

643 I feel, was not due to a break-up of the chief's
175 power but rather to a breakdown of domestic
648 slavery and the system of sanctions that lay behind it, thereby freeing slaves who started setting up their own homesteads. It illustrates that the social system was fundamentally disturbed by the changes wrought by British domination as early as 1903.

643 This process continued until the Administration
622 saw fit in 1912 to introduce legislation to prevent
175 further splitting up of communities and to give
648 a certain amount of power to "paid native local authorities . . . who shall be responsible to the District Residents for the good order and administration of their villages or areas." [3] Hence with the passing of the District Administration (Natives) Ordinance 1912, the Administration began to recognize the indigenous political functionaries and to absorb them into the general political machinery of the Territory. In this Ordinance, village headmen were recognized as possessing a certain amount of power over the people who lived in their villages. Amongst the village headmen one was to be recognized as a Principal Village Headman. The Ordinance made it clear that the position of the Principal Village Headman was in no way to be regarded as similar to the old tribal position of chief. Though the Ordinance further warned that persons who were formerly chiefs were not necessarily to be appointed Principal Headmen, it should be noted that many Principal Headmen were in fact such people. Thus, in 1912, the leadership position of certain headmen in the Territory, though always recognized by the Africans themselves before that date, was further officially recognized and they were given specific powers by the British. "Residents were to indicate carefully by their attitude towards, and dealings with, Principal Headmen the fact that they were officially recognized as chiefs in their respective sections and that, as such, they were entitled to the respect and obedience of their people." [4] Nevertheless it was planned to have a structure

[text continues top of p.148A]

8:Mitchell E-5 (1946-1947) 1949 FT7 Yao FT7
[P.147C]

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[1] Recorded in the District Book at the District Commissioner's Office in Zambia.
[2] Annual Report of the Territory 1903-4 quoted in S. S. Mossner, *Handbook of Nyasaland*, (London: 1932), p. 128. [3] S. S. Mossner (1932). [4] S. S. Mossner (1932), p. 130.

[P.149A]

643 in which the District Commissioner would be
622 the real authority with the Principal Headmen
as his subordinates, to carry out certain well-
● 175 defined duties under his instructions. The
648 Principal Headmen were expected to assist in the concentration of the huts in accordance with the new regulations concerning village headmen and the villages they controlled. Measures for the sanitation in the villages, sweeping and cleaning of villages, the construction of refuse-pits and latrines, were included in the Ordinance and the responsibility for this devolved upon the headmen. Village headmen were also expected to report crimes, abnormal illnesses and deaths, and so on. A clause specifically stated that no power to hear

[TEXT CONTINUES TOP OF P.149B]

IV. THE PRESENT POSITION

643 In order to illustrate the structure of the political
175 divisions with which we are dealing, I shall
outline the make-up of the three districts under
648 the Native Authorities Kawinga, Liwonde and
Nyambi (see accompanying map).
131 It will be recalled that Kawinga and Liwonde trace their descent from a single ancestress three generations back from the present Kawinga and five generations back from the present Liwonde. The groups under the leadership of these two brothers Liwonde I and Kawinga I, entered Nyasaland in the early part of the nineteenth century and after various campaigns in Mount Mangoche area migrated across the Shire River at Mvera and took up their position on Kangwa hill. Here the second Kawinga died. Shortly after this the groups were displaced by Ngoni raids and they recrossed the Shire River and moved southwards to displace another Yao chief, Malemia, from Mount Cikala (near Zomba), which stronghold Kawinga held until they were displaced by the British attacks in 1895. Liwonde at first occupied the neighbouring range Caoni but soon moved down to the Shire River. He too was displaced by British attacks and fled with Ka-

[TEXT CONTINUES MIDDLE OF P.149B]

643 and determine petty native cases was conferred
622 upon the headmen, though the District Commis-
175 sioner was supposed to seek their advice when
648 necessary.

Therefore, from the time of conquest a pattern of superordination of the Whites and subordination of the Africans was established and the indigenous political system remained largely without official recognition until the Native Authorities Ordinance was passed in 1933. The major change wrought by this Ordinance was that Native Courts were planned and instituted by the Native Courts Ordinance of the same year. At the same time a Native Treasury was founded.

IV. The Present POSITION

643 wings to Portuguese East Africa. They were
175 allowed to return later and they took up their
648 positions in an area roughly outlined in the early
131 part of this paper. At the same time, owing to military action by the Portuguese a certain number of refugees were crossing the border into the Lake Chuta area of Nyasaland.

TABLE I

Demographic Composition of Political Areas[1]

162 643 631 [563]

Sub. Area	*Tot. Pop.*	*Admin. Vills.*	*Av. Pop. of Admin. Vills.*	*Tribal Composition*			
				Yao	Nyanja	Mpoto	Ngoni
				%	%	%	%
N.A. Kawinga (Yao)	23,087	311	74	51	37	10	2
S.N.A. Cambu (Yao)	5,119	61	84	72	20	7	1
S.N.A. Mpona (Yao)	4,411	60	74	49	19	32	—
S.N.A. Chiwalo (Yao)	2,202	19	116	80	15	5	—
S.N.A. Ngokwe (Mpotola)	2,868	21	136	16	43	40	1
S.N.A. Chikwen (Mpotola)	7,102	49	145	28	56	16	—
N.A. Liwonde (Yao)[2]	12,716	106	120	75	20	5	—
N.A. Nyambi (Yao)[2]	7,335	63[3]	116	73	27	—	—

9:Lawson Y-5 (ca. 1940)1949 FT? Yao FT?
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[D.180B]

Acknowledgements are due to many African friends who have freely given me information, and especially to Mr. Bennett Malekebebu.

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M
[197]

THE present Bantu population of the Shiré Highlands in South Nyasaland consists of four major groups :

1. The Nyanja tribe, the country's earliest known inhabitants, whose language is closely allied to that of the Sena and Tette people on the Zambesi and the Sengs on the Loangwa, but whose origin is uncertain. In 1858 Livingstone found various branches of this tribe settled throughout South Nyasaland.

Y
[175]

2. The Yao tribe, numbers of whom between 1860 and 1870 were driven southwards from their home in Portuguese East Africa by the neighbouring Amakua 'Wololo. These fugitive Yao fell upon the unwarlike Nyanja, conquered and subjugated their chiefs, and finally settling among them, intermarried to a certain extent.

3. A sprinkling of Ngoni, that branch of the Zulu whose flight from Chaka, wanderings in East Africa and ultimate settlement in Nyasaland and Portuguese East Africa, are familiar history. In the Shiré Highlands Ngoni are found only in small scattered groups, for their real home is the "Angoni Highlands" of central Nyasaland.

4. Recent immigrants from various tribes in Moçambique, given by Nyanja and Yao the indiscriminate name of "Lomwe", (i.e., possibly, "people from Lomwe Hill") or more rudely, "Nguru", (i.e. "people who speak indistinctly, like drunkards").

Y
M
[174]
[131]
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This study was made in the district around Zomba and deals exclusively with the Nyanja and Yao TRIBES, WHO THERE PREDOMINATE